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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/073,003	02/12/2002	Hsien-Kuei Liao	MR2349-794	5114

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EXAMINER

JACKSON, CORNELIUS H

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2828

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/073,003

Applicant(s)

LIAO ET AL.

Examiner

Cornelius H. Jackson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.



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Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps, such omission amounting to a gap between the steps. See MPEP § 2172.01.

4. Claims 1 and 2 recite the functional "whereby (wherein)" statement, it has been held that the functional "whereby (wherein)" statement does not define any structure and accordingly can not serve to distinguish. In re Mason, 114 USPQ 127, 44 CCPA 937 (1957).

5. Regarding claims 2-9, the phrase "which may include", in claim 2, renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d). Claims 3-9 are rejected because they depend on indefinite claim 2.

6. Claim 2 recites the limitation "each resonance cavity" in line 6 of the claim. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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7. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the necessary structural connections. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted structural cooperative relationships are: the plurality of optical variable attenuators and 1xN fixed ratio splitter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or

(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for the purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language; or

The publication under the treaty defined in section 351(a) of this title, of an international application designating the United States shall be deemed a publication under section 122(b), except as provided in sections 102(e) and 154(d) of this title.

9. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ohshima (6320694). Ohshima discloses a multi-channel fiber laser array **Fig. 5** comprising a pumping laser source **62**, 1xN variable ratio splitter **63**, a power-equalizing device **53/64/67**, a plurality of WDM couplers **44, 68, and 71**, a plurality of EDFs **46 and 70**, and a plurality of fiber gratings **48 and 73**.

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Regarding claim 3, Ohshima discloses the power-equalizing device consists of a plurality of optical variable attenuators **53/64/67** and a 1xN fixed ratio splitter **146/174**, see **Figs. 5, 17, 19 and 21**.

Regarding claims 4-7, Ohshima discloses all the stated limitations, see **col. 9, line 9-col. 10, line 53, col. 14, line 40-col. 15, line 5 and col. 15, line 26-col. 16, line 67**.

Regarding claim 1, the method of forming a device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, the rejection used against the device, stands for the method as well.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohshima (6320694). Ohshima, as applied to claims 1-7 above, teach all the stated limitations except for the wavelength of the pumping laser. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to pump the fiber laser array at a given wavelength in order to obtain a desired output wavelength, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known

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material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Da Silva et al. (6347099), Kim et al. (5524118), Nakaji et al. (6456428) and Yamada et al. (6236496) all teach, alone and/or in combination, the claimed invention.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cornelius H. Jackson whose telephone number is (703) 306-5981. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 - 5:00, Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Ip can be reached on (703) 308-3098. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)308-7722 for regular communications and (703)308-7721 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0956.


chj

December 12, 2002


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